

**University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
Participating in ARPA-H Proposals and Contracts**

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KEY CU ANSCHUTZ CONTACT

Contact Erin Calhoun, Assistant Director, Extramural Research (erin.calhoun@cuanschutz.edu), for information related to these practice standards, ARPA-H standard operating procedures, and/or questions regarding ARPA-H funding opportunities, proposals and/or contracts.

ARPA-H OVERVIEW

The Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) represents a fundamentally different model of research funding compared to traditional federal sponsors. The agency is specifically designed to support high-risk, high-reward, and transformative research that is often too complex, speculative, or time-sensitive for conventional funding mechanisms.

Unlike traditional grant structures, ARPA-H utilizes contract-based funding mechanisms that are:

- Milestone-driven, with payments contingent on achieving defined technical and programmatic deliverables.
- Performance-managed, with active program oversight and the ability for the sponsor to modify, pivot, or terminate projects that do not meet expectations.
- Time-bound and accelerated, requiring rapid mobilization of teams and resources within compressed timelines.

These characteristics create significant scientific, operational, financial, and contractual risk for investigators and institutions. At the same time, they offer the opportunity to deliver breakthrough advances with national and global impact.

PURPOSE

The purpose of these practice standards is to establish clear, institutional requirements and a coordinated framework for participating in ARPA-H opportunities at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

Accordingly, the University has established a coordinated approach led by the Office of Research Development and Strategy (ORDS) to ensure that ARPA-H participation is:

- Strategically aligned and competitive at the national level.
- Structured to manage and mitigate institutional and project risk.
- Supported with appropriate infrastructure, expertise, and oversight throughout the full lifecycle of the project.

The requirement to engage ORDS is not intended to create administrative burden or barriers to participation. Rather, ORDS serves as a strategic partner and enabling resources to:

- Help investigators navigate the unique ARPA-H model, including its contracting, milestone, and teaming requirements.
- Protect principal investigators, project teams, and the institution from undue risk exposure.
- Ensure that projects are appropriately prioritized, resourced, and managed given their complexity and visibility.
- Provide proactive problem-solving and coordination to support success from concept development through project execution and closeout.

Through these standards, the University affirms its commitment to empowering investigators to pursue bold, high-impact ARPA-H opportunities, while ensuring that the appropriate structures are in place to enable success, safeguard the institution, and maximize the likelihood of delivering transformative outcomes.

PRACTICE STANDARDS STATEMENT

All CU Anschutz investigators and research teams pursuing or participating in ARPA-H opportunities—whether as **prime applicant, subawardee, or collaborator**—are required to **engage ORDS throughout the full lifecycle of the project**.

ORDS serves as the central coordinating body for ARPA-H activities and provides critical expertise in program strategy, proposal development, contract negotiation, and post-award execution.

SCOPE

These standards apply to:

- All faculty, investigators, and research staff pursuing ARPA-H funding.
- All schools, departments, and administrative units involved in ARPA-H proposals or contracts.
- All phases of ARPA-H engagement (proposal, negotiation, and award management).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Office of Research Development and Strategy (ORDS)

ORDS will:

- Provide **strategic guidance and coordination** for ARPA-H proposals and contracts, including serving as the official CU Anschutz liaison to ARPA-H program managers and other agency leadership.
- Lead or co-lead **pre-award planning, proposal development, and administrative oversight**.
- Coordinate with campus units to ensure compliance with institutional, sponsor, and regulatory requirements.
- Lead **negotiation activities** in collaboration with the Office of Grants and Contracts (OGC).
- Monitor **project performance and milestone progress** during post-award and intervene when necessary to mitigate risk.

Investigators and Departments

Research teams must:

- Notify ORDS (Erin Calhoun, erin.calhoun@cuanschutz.edu) **at the earliest intent to apply or participate** in an ARPA-H opportunity. Notification should be made as soon as possible when CU Anschutz will serve as the prime organization. When CU Anschutz will serve as a subawardee or collaborator, ORDS must be notified at least three weeks prior to the prime organization's deadline (not the sponsor deadline).
- Collaborate fully with ORDS throughout all phases of the project lifecycle.
- Adhere to institutional processes for proposal submission, budgeting, and compliance. This includes **routing solution summaries and full proposals to OGC** for review and approval.
- Participate in required coordination, reporting, and governance activities.
- Facilitate connections between ORDS and project managers/research administrators from collaborating institutions.

REQUIRED ENGAGEMENT WITH ORDS

1. Proposal Development Phase

- **Mandatory early notification** to ORDS upon intent to pursue ARPA-H funding
- ORDS involvement in:
 - Team formation and submission strategy
 - Proposal planning, timelines, and coordination
 - Budget development and review
 - Administrative and compliance documentation
- All proposals must undergo **ORDS review prior to submission/routing to OGC**

2. Negotiation Phase

- ORDS **leads institutional coordination** during ARPA-H negotiations
- All communications and requested revisions from ARPA-H must be managed in collaboration with ORDS
- ORDS works jointly with OGC and research teams to finalize contract terms

3. Post-Award Phase

- ORDS provides **ongoing oversight of project performance**, with emphasis on milestone achievement
- ORDS participates in **standing meetings and financial reviews**
- ORDS may convene **internal advisory or governance structures** to address risks and ensure project success
- Projects may require **dedicated project management resources aligned with ORDS guidance**

COMPLIANCE

Failure to engage ORDS as outlined above and detailed in the ARPA-H Standard Operating Procedures document may:

- Result in **delays or inability to submit proposals**.
- Impact institutional approval of ARPA-H participation.
- Increase risk of **non-compliance with contract terms and institutional policies**, and therefore risk project termination.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- ARPA-H projects involve **high-risk, milestone-based contracts with non-guaranteed funding**, requiring coordinated institutional oversight.
- Success depends on **early planning, integrated team science, and centralized coordination**.
- ORDS serves as the **hub of CU Anschutz's ARPA-H Ecosystem**, enabling effective collaboration and execution.